

ful with regard to him. Some of Ms recent letters were very interesting. In 1903, speakMng of my left having politics, he says: "As for me, like the Thane of Cawdor, 'I am chained to the stake, and hear-like must fight my course.' I am tired—even to the marrow of my bones; but at present there seems no way out; and in truth I have been wonderfully favored by fortune. Almost everything I set out to do, five years ago, is done; and I ought to be thankful."

Last January he wrote to me with much feeling about the noble compliment which you paid him by announcing that he was to remain Secretary of State until 1909. "I have no idea, however," he says, "that my term of office will extend to that length. In fact, I have grave doubts whether this tenement of clay which I inhabit will hold together that long. I wish I could look forward to so cheery a prospect as that of visiting Stratford-on-Avon in your company; but that prospect also is dim. Walking with Henry Adams the other day, I expressed my fear that, by the time I got out of office, I should have lost the faculty of enjoyment. As you know Adams, you can understand the dry malice with which he replied: 'Make your mind easy on that score, sonny! You've lost it now/ "

It is a very serious matter in free countries, full of able men struggling to the front, the great age of successful statesmen. I am satisfied that a good man, with an early chance, is most valuable any time on from five or six and twenty, and seldom good for much after five

and sixty.
Politics is like war, inasmuch as when a man
shrinks from anything great or small, which requires doing,
from considerations of health and strength, he is no
longer a true
campaigner. Our generation in England was
curiously affected by the question of age. Mr. Gladstone,
in gifts and
faculties, was exactly a whole generation
better than his
time of life; and, while the Liberal party in
some respects
gained by it, it in some respects was
damaged. In his later
years he sometimes retained in important
offices old col-
leagues who, though they were actually his
juniors, were